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Rippers leave trail of troubles

Game over. Staff, others left reeling as baseball team folds

JOHN MATISZ
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The London Rippers may be gone, but the team's woes are still rippling through the community.

Players haven't been paid. Employees are reportedly talking to lawyers about how to get the money they're owed. The city is reviewing the team's contractual obligations at Labatt Park.

Dan Gaffney
METRO

And season-ticket holders? That's anyone's guess.

Details about how they will be compensated were not mentioned in a four-sentence statement announcing the team's demise late Tuesday.

Simply put, practically everyone with ties to David Martin's promise of bringing professional baseball back to London is out in the cold.

"Do I feel cheated and blindsided? Absolutely," said Dan Gaffney, director of corporate sales. "Now it's over, and we're here trying to clean up the mess."

David Martin
METRO

Martin, a Michigan native who swept into London last fall with a Frontier League franchise and big dreams, was nowhere to be found on Wednesday as Rippers volunteers and employees met one last time at Labatt Park. He didn't return a phone call from Metro.

Gaffney and others were hardly shocked by the news. The writing had been on the wall since practically Day 1, some employees said, and became even clearer last week when the Rippers were evicted from space leased for a team store.

"At the end of the day, we owe a lot of people money," Gaffney said. "I'm not a millionaire like these owners. I need this money to live."

City officials offered no comment.

Martin's one-year lease on Labatt Park required that he pay $50,000 in rent from Nov. 1, 2011, to Oct. 31, 2012, and make a $23,000 donation for upgrades to the venue.

Bill Coxhead, director of parks and recreation, said $25,000 in rent was paid upfront last fall, as the contract stipulated, along with at least some of the donation. The rest was to be paid in instalments.

Bill Coxhead
METRO

Coxhead said he couldn't comment Wednesday on how much has been received.

"We're going to be looking at what our obligations are under the contract, what our remedies are and what we're going to do," he said.

Rumours that the city had locked the team out of Labatt Park aren't true, he said. "We were expecting them to play ball there Wednesday."

MORE RIPPERS FALLOUT, PAGE 2

The players

- When the Rippers folded, employees lost their jobs. But players will finish out the season as a travelling team, under the banner of the Road Warriors. The team's logo and roster were added to the Frontier League's website on Wednesday.

Timeline

A brief team history:

- **Sept. 27, 2011:** A city council committee gives tentative approval to David Martin for a one-year lease at Labatt Park for his Frontier League squad.
- **Oct. 3:** Council OK's the deal, with Martin's lease running from Nov. 1, 2011, to Oct. 31, 2012.
- **Nov. 15:** Martin unveils the London Rippers name and logo, drawing outrage from some who objected to the parallel with notorious serial killer Jack the Ripper. The issue draws international media attention.
- **Nov. 16:** City officials ask Martin to reconsider the name, but Martin defends it.
- **April 9, 2012:** Martin tells city staff the name is here to stay.
- **May 18:** The Rippers play their first road game against the Southern Illinois Miners.
- **May 25:** The Rippers play their first game at Labatt Park.
- **June 21:** Martin decries not being able to serve beer at games because the Labatt Park liquor licence is held by the London Majors. He challenges the Majors to a three-game series for the rights to serve suds.
- **July 18:** An eviction notice is posted on the door of the Rippers' merchandise store in Market Tower. The notice says money owing to the landlord is more than 15 days late.
- **July 24:** The Rippers issue a statement at 10:43 p.m. saying the team has folded.

Follow John Matisz on Twitter @Metro_JMatisz

NEWS 1

Name spelled team's demise

Rippers. Intern says things would have been much different if owner had chosen a different moniker

April Whitzman came to London from Halifax in April with a fresh college degree under her belt and plans to stick with the Rippers for a long haul.

"I really thought they were going to stay the season and next year they'd hire me full time," said Whitzman, one of five unpaid interns with the now-defunct baseball team.

It didn't take long for the 24-year-old Campbellton, N.B., native to realize things weren't going to be so rosy.

"From Day 1, we knew something wasn't right," said Whitzman, describing the reaction she and others received while handing out schedules in early May.

As the team knocked on doors and offered greetings from the London Rippers, people weren't exactly rolling out welcome mats.

The team's naming fiasco, though months old at that point, was obviously still on people's minds, Whitzman said. Despite owner David Martin's insistence that he wasn't building a brand on the back of infamous serial killer Jack the Ripper, people weren't convinced.

"People were telling us we shouldn't be promoting rape, saying we should go get raped ourselves. Stuff like that," Whitzman said Wednesday, a day after the Rippers ceased operations.

When it came to organization and communication, the Rippers were a mess from the get-go, she said. The right hand hardly ever knew what the left hand was doing, and middle-level managers couldn't answer questions because upper-level managers didn't keep them in the loop.

"I feel like we were trying to pitch a no-hitter all by ourselves without any defence," Whitzman said.

By the end of June, everyone on the team's staff was questioning whether the Rippers would make it through the season, she said, largely because attendance was so dismal.

Team officials have publicly said average game attendance was about 856, but Whitzman said it was more along the lines of 150.

Ticket sales were tough, she said, because groups like schools and churches were put off by the team's name.

Had Martin been willing to bend on the name and logo, things likely would have been much different, Whitzman said.

Martin "didn't know his audience, didn't know how the public would react," she said. "If the name had changed ... we'd be sitting here prepared for a game with 1,000 fans."

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Majors step up to plate

In the wake of the London Rippers going out of business, Labatt Memorial Park's other tenant — the London Majors — is reaching out to now-jobless interns.

- As they head into the postseason, the Inter-county Baseball League squad is offering temporary positions to all five Rippers interns.
- "We want them to finish what they started in London," said Scott Dart, co-owner of the Majors. "As a side benefit to them, they get to see how two different organizations work, so hopefully that helps with their learning."

JOHN MATISZ/METRO

London Rippers intern April Whitzman, 24, poses for a picture Wednesday at Labatt Park. She's on the hunt for work after moving to London from Halifax for a position with the team. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Londoner on hot seat in aftermath

If there's one person who seemingly won't be able to avoid the aftermath of the London Rippers debacle, it's Londoner Mike Lumley.

As the local face and consummate baseball guy in the front office, Lumley was recruited to be the team's assistant general manager and coach partly because of his strong links to the community.

Now, with owner David Martin and vice-president Alison Stier allegedly skipping town before the pieces could be picked up off the ground, the former major-league prospect will field the bulk of the backlash.

"I wouldn't say I regret it completely," said Lumley when asked if he'd do it all over again. "But, in hindsight, with all the crap that's happened, yes, I do a little bit. It's embarrassing."

Lumley, 45, has been a crucial contributor to the growth of London's minor-baseball scene, working as an instructor for Centrefield Sports' indoor-training facility and chairing the London Badgers minor organization, among other commitments.

Over the course of July, the heap of issues surrounding the Rippers — from the painfully low attendance numbers to unpaid sponsors and landlords to an unwinnable request for a liquor licence — became too much to handle for Lumley.

However, the 2011 Baseball Ontario coach of the year says he didn't feel right resigning, as he didn't want to "bail" on the players.

"I was left in the dark with a lot of stuff," he said. "I had nothing to do with the money. I was the baseball, on-field guy. But I was still the constant guy that the players and employers came to, asking about what was going on. Once that started happening, I knew there were issues."

JOHN MATISZ/METRO

More fallout

Player loses another option in minor leagues

While employees gathered at Labatt Memorial Park on Wednesday in search of answers following the London Rippers' demise, a 23-year-old baseball player from Toronto looked for his own.

Shaking his head while kicking the dirt around him, the outfielder — who asked to remain anonymous — frustratedly spoke about how the Rippers represented his "next viable option."

His old team, the Trinidad Triggers of the Pecos League, also closed up shop halfway through its debut season.

He drove to London in hopes of bumping into one of the team's coaches as they prepared to open a home stand Wednesday night.

"These independent teams are always so unorganized," he said. "I just want to play some ball. I can't believe another team is done." JOHN MATISZ/METRO

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Zelinka heads to Games after finding 'mental sweet spot'

London-born heptathlete. Jessica Zelinka will be one of the busiest Summer Olympics athletes as she competes in both women's seven-event heptathlon and 100-metre hurdles

JOHN MATISZ
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If Jessica Zelinka is anything, it's 100 per cent honest.

Two summers ago, the London native told the Torstar News Service about her battle with traveller's diarrhea at the Commonwealth Games. The two-time Olympian said she informed her coach that a second pair of shorts might be needed because the sickness was taking "a bit of a toll" on her body.

In a recent interview with Metro, the heptathlete described her latest health-related incident: Her first run-in with a wasp in early July.

"It could have been worse," Zelinka, 30, said via phone from Calgary. "I didn't know I was allergic, though, so I had to go to the hospital. They told me I reacted badly and had hives."

The sting halted her training for a few days but, as the 2012 Summer Olympics approach, the current holder of two national track golds — women's 100-metre hurdles and heptathlon — promises she's back to full health.

In fact, Zelinka says she's found her "mental sweet spot," and is confident enough in her abilities to believe she can establish a personal-best score in the two-day spectacle that is the Olympic heptathlon.

At the 2008 Summer Olympics, the Canadian record-holder in women's heptathlon (6,599 points) was kept off the podium, finishing fifth overall.

"Getting more than 6,600 is my realistic goal this time," the Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School and Western University alumnus said. "I'm going to focus on my score and my score only, and then see what unfolds. In such a long competition, there's no point in aiming for a certain medal."

Zelinka wasn't expecting to take national gold this year in the 100-metre hurdles, so she hopes to just keep pace with the 12.68-second benchmark in England in her second competition of the Games.

The mother of one has embraced the double-duty role and wouldn't have it any other way.

"I can't imagine training for one event," she said when asked if dropping the heptathlon is a possibility in the future. "I love having to try to be as consistent as possible, yet push boundaries."

For more Olympics coverage, go to metronews.ca/olympics and turn to pages 20-22.

Follow John Matisz on Twitter @Metro_JMatisz

What's the difference?

- **Triathlon (3 events):** Swimming, cycling, running.
- **Heptathlon (7 events):** Throwing, jumping, running, hurdling.
- **Decathlon (10 events):** Throwing, jumping, running, hurdling, vaulting.

Previous London-born Summer Olympics medallists

- **Adam Kreek,** rowing, gold (2008)
- **Jon Beare,** rowing, bronze (2008)
- **Brian Peaker,** rowing, silver (1996)
- **Bill Kennedy,** swimming, bronze (1972)
- **Angela Coughlan,** swimming, bronze (1968)
- **Harold Little,** rowing, silver (1924)

Source: Sports-Reference.com

Jessica Zelinka, centre, of London out-races Phylicia George, left, and Perdita Felicien to victory in the women's 100-metre hurdles at the Canadian Track and Field Championships in Calgary on June 30. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Decathlete. Damian Warner using first Olympics to test waters

Since he hasn't had much time to absorb his surroundings over the past five years, Damian Warner plans on treating his trip to the 2012 Summer Olympics as a reward.

"I'm hoping to just take it all in, especially since it's my first one," said Warner, a 22-year-old decathlete from London.

Growing up, Warner, a London-Western Track Club alumnus, ran cross-country and played basketball. He didn't get his start in short-distance running until Grade 11, when two teachers at Montcalm Secondary School decided to form a track-and-field team.

Since then, Canada's reigning champion in the 100-metre dash, 400-metre sprint and high jump has taken on a non-stop lifestyle of schooling and training.

Damian Warner speaks to supporters at a recent rally in London. JOHN MATISZ/METRO

It's prepared him to compete in one of the most grueling sports in the world, the decathlon. And the whirlwind comes full circle at the Games.

At an Olympic sendoff event hosted by Kelsey's restaurant on Oxford Street, Warner's coach, Gar Leyshon, told the approximately 100-strong crowd that his pupil's success has been an ongoing process.

"People think this happens overnight, but it doesn't," Leyshon said.

The six-foot-one 182-pounder is a proud product of the Kipps Lane neighbourhood. His mother raised him and two siblings by working multiple jobs. The family had its troubles, Warner says, but "got by" and "never really struggled too bad."

"It's always nice to show people can come out of rougher areas," the 10-event athlete said. "There could be other athletes in there, you just have to give them the chance."

When you talk to Warner, one of the first things you notice is that he says "we" a lot when answering questions.

He's a strong supporter of the oft-forgotten role the supporting cast plays in individual sports. Without the help of a personal physiotherapist, for instance, Warner's body aches more than it has to.

The events Warner particularly excels in, such as the 100-metre, are based around raw athleticism. Events he lags in, on the other hand, like shot-put, depend on ample strength.

Warner, naturally, credits his coaches for closing the gap on the competition in weaker events.

"This isn't just about me," he said. "We're all going to the Olympics."

JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Other Londoners at the Games

Joe Bartoch, 29, swimming
After finishing tied for 34th at the 2008 Summer Olympics in the 100-metre butterfly, Bartoch is seeking redemption in the pool. As co-captain of Canada's swim team, he will compete in both the 100-metre and 100-metre medley relay.

Lesley Thompson-Willie, 52, rowing
As a member of the women's eight crew that has gold-medal-winning potential, the fiery coxswain will be participating in her seventh Summer Olympics. The local legend already has a gold (Barcelona), two silvers (Los Angeles and Atlanta), and one bronze (Sydney).

Ashley Brzozowicz, 29, rowing
Brzozowicz, a member of the Western Rowing Club, is one of the rising stars in the national rowing program. She's a key cog in the women's eight boat that hopes to make up for a fourth-place finish at the 2008 Summer Olympics.

Miranda Ayim, 24, basketball
Ayim and decathlete Damian Warner are the only Londoners set to compete in their first Olympics. The six-foot-three 160-pounder will play centre for the women's basketball team. METRO

On-duty incidents

London officer charged with sexual assault

A London police officer has been charged with sexual assault. Police allege three separate assaults were committed from June 2011 to last month involving two women described as acquaintances. It's alleged the incidents took place while the officer was on duty. Const. Andrew Michalski, 31, an 11-year force member, is due in court Sept. 6. He has been suspended from active duty. THE CANADIAN PRESS

112,500-strong petition

Corner stores lobby to sell beer, wine

Ontario's convenience stores have collected 112,500 signatures from across the province in a new effort to gain permission to sell beer and wine. Former premier David Peterson promised to allow corner stores to sell beer and wine in the 1980s, but it never happened and the current Liberal government has no plans to change the rules. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Redevelopment plan

Old East building could get new lease on life

A proposal has been submitted that would breathe new life into the Old McCormick's building. The abandoned factory, which was built in 1913 but has been vacant since 2008, has previously failed to attract buyers — due in part to an outstanding tax bill that has since expired. The offer comes from JEC Contracting in Toronto, which is willing to purchase the property and redevelop the land into a seniors' condo complex if certain conditions are met. AM980/AM980.CA

Ontario politics

Tories dispute pay freeze for teachers

The opposition is disputing the Liberal government's claim that it has negotiated a two-year pay freeze with the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association, pointing to a contract provision that would mean automatic annual raises for many teachers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Harris Park ready to rock

Festival's ninth year. Three nights of music starting Thursday will support local charity

ANGELA MULLINS
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It seems fairly simple: To pull off an awesome rock concert, you need awesome musicians and a pumped-up crowd.

Turns out, you also need 200-plus volunteers, more than 100 portable toilets, tonnes of ice, enough food to feed an army, and somewhere along the lines of 4,000 cases of beer.

Stocking Harris Park with those amenities — and then some — has been the focus this week as organizers prepare for Thursday's kickoff of Rock the Park.

"We started at 5:30 a.m. Monday morning," said Greg Jones, vice-president of Jones Entertainment Group as crews worked Wednesday. "And by Tuesday morning, you won't even know we were here."

While a lot goes into turning a sprawling green lot into a concert venue, Jones Entertainment Group has pretty much got Rock the Park down to a science after eight years.

But, Jones said, that wasn't always the case.

"The first year, two hours before the show, we were still running around getting ready."

Workers were putting the finishing touches on Rock the Park's stage Wednesday in Harris Park. The festival starts Thursday. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

As for the music, organizers are promising the best show yet with an expected 8,500 people packing into the park each night though Saturday.

Even more people will watch from the sidelines, lining up several rows deep along the banks of the Thames River and the Queens Avenue bridge, officials said.

Rock the Park is a fundraiser for Bethany's Hope Foundation and has raised $1.2 million in the past eight years. Tickets will be available at the festival. Visit rockthepark.ca for details.

Follow Angela Mullins on Twitter @MetroAngela

Rock the Park lineup

- **Thursday**
  4:30 p.m. Monster Truck
  6 p.m. I Mother Earth
  7:30 p.m. Bush
  9:30 p.m. Slash with Myles Kennedy
- **Friday**
  4:30 p.m. The Romantics
  6 p.m. David Wilcox
  7:30 p.m. George Thorogood
  9:30 p.m. Steve Miller Band
- **Saturday**
  4:30 p.m. Prism
  6 p.m. 54-40
  7:30 p.m. REO Speedwagon
  9:30 p.m. Boston

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Premiers' meeting

McGuinty wants health care, energy discussed

Ontario's Dalton McGuinty wants to talk with his fellow premiers about health care and energy at their annual meeting in Halifax this week.

McGuinty says he'll raise the issue of ever-increasing health-care spending to see what the provinces can do together to keep costs down, especially when dealing with doctors' salaries.

And he says it's time the premiers came up with suggestions for a national energy strategy that doesn't just subsidize projects like Alberta's oilsands.

McGuinty says he also wants to see federal support for Ontario's plans to get out of coal-fired generation and switch to renewable, green forms of energy. THE CANADIAN PRESS

National security

Surveillance info no longer public

The curtains at Canada's most secretive federal agency have been drawn a little tighter. The government has quietly stopped telling Canadians about the annual priorities of the national electronic eavesdropping agency — meaning scant details of its mission, once public, are now classified. THE CANADIAN PRESS

LGBT

Scots legalizing gay marriage

Scotland's government has announced plans to legalize same-sex marriages. The measure has backing from the major Scottish political parties. It follows a public consultation on the issue. When enacted, Scotland could become the first part of the U.K. to allow same-sex marriages. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. ingenuity

Use of legal synthetic drugs up

People are inventing so many new, legal ways to get high that U.S. lawmakers can't seem to keep up.

Over the past two years, the country has seen a surge in the use of synthetic drugs made of legal chemicals that mimic the dangerous effects of cocaine, amphetamines and other illegal stimulants. Some are imported cheaply from China or India.

The drugs are often sold at small, independent stores in misleading packaging that suggests common household items like bath salts, incense and plant food. But the substances are powerful, mind-altering drugs that have been linked to bizarre and violent behaviour across the country. Law-enforcement officials refer to the drugs collectively as "bath salts," though they have nothing in common with the toiletries. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gun sales surge across U.S.

Colorado theatre massacre. While the shootings have stirred debate on gun control, Washington stays mum

Firearms sales are surging after last week's Colorado theatre massacre as buyers fear that politicians may use the shootings to seek new restrictions on owning weapons.

Some Democratic lawmakers in Congress cited the shooting as evidence of the need for tougher gun-control laws — particularly a ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines. Congress, however, hasn't passed strict legislation in more than a decade, and leaders in Washington show no sign of bringing up such measures anytime soon.

In Colorado, where Friday's shooting killed 12, gun sales jumped in the three days that followed. The state approved background checks for 2,887 people who wanted to purchase a firearm — 25 per cent more than the average Friday-to-Sunday period in 2012 and 43 per cent more than the same interval the week prior.

Dick Rutan, owner of Gunners Den in Arvada, Colo., said requests for concealed-weapon training certification "are off the hook." His course in gun safety, required for certification for a concealed-weapons permit in Colorado, has drawn double the interest since Friday.

"They want ... the ability to protect themselves and their families if they are in a situation like what happened in the movie theatre," Rutan said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Other parts of the U.S.

- **Florida.** Saw 2,386 background checks, up 14 per cent from a week prior.
- **Oregon.** Sales up 11 per cent over last month.
- **California.** Background checks up 10 per cent over last month.

Actor Christian Bale and his wife, Sibi Blazic, are seen Tuesday at a memorial dedicated to Veronica Moser-Sullivan, 6, the youngest of the 12 victims of Friday's mass shooting in Aurora, Colo. TED S. WARREN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eldest victim

First funeral held

A dad who took his teenage children to the new Batman movie and was killed when a gunman opened fire was mourned Wednesday, the first memorial service for a victim of the shootings.

Fifty-one-year-old Gordon Cowden was the oldest of the 12 people killed. His teenage children escaped unharmed.

A family statement described him as a "true Texas gentleman" who loved the outdoors and owned his own business.

Funerals were planned in towns from San Antonio, home of aspiring sportscaster Jessica Ghawi, to Crystal Lake, Ill., the hometown of navy intelligence officer John Thomas Larimer. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korea. Mystery woman wife of leader

North Korea ended weeks of speculation Wednesday by confirming that the mystery woman beside young leader Kim Jong Un at recent public events is indeed his wife, "comrade Ri Sol Ju." The news was buried in a state TV report about Kim's tour of an amusement park, delivered casually by a newscaster who gave no details about Ri, including how long she and Kim have been married.

Kim, who inherited rule of North Korea from his father, Kim Jong Il, seven months ago, has been seen with Ri at a concert, a kindergarten visit and other events recently, but state media did not mention her before now, fueling widespread speculation about her identity.

Analysts said the announcement was a calculated move by Kim and his advisers as they forge the image of the 20-something leader who took power following the December death of Kim Jong Il.

"Kim Jong Un is breaking with his father's secrecy-shrouded leadership," said Lim Eul-chul, a North Korea expert at South Korea's Kyungnam University. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ri Sol Ju, Kim Jong Un's wife. KOREAN CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY VIA KOREA NEWS SERVICE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

England. Boy flies to Rome without ticket, passport

The 11-year-old boy didn't have a passport, didn't have a ticket, didn't have a boarding pass and got all the way from England to Italy on his own.

For him, the 1,700-kilometre journey was a great adventure — and his excitement led to his discovery.

"He was chatting away about being off by himself," and passengers alerted the cabin crew, Russell Craig, a spokesman for Manchester Airport, said Wednesday.

The boy, who is known to be fascinated by transport and has a history of catching free rides on trains and buses, was sent back to Manchester on the return flight, Craig said.

For the airport, airline Jet2.com and the British government, Tuesday's incident was an embarrassing breach of security days before the start of the Olympics.

Quoted

"It's a security breach, if a non-threatening security breach."

Ben Vogel, HIS Jane's Airport Review

Ben Vogel, editor of HIS Jane's Airport Review, said he wasn't familiar with all the details of the incident but said it's a fundamental security principle that people aren't allowed aboard an aircraft if they have no right to be there.

"It's not good, is it?" he said. "It is a security breach, if a non-threatening security breach."

An undisclosed number of security staff employed by the airport and airline employees have been suspended while authorities investigate. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Montreal. Public funeral for Lin held today

A public funeral will be held today for Jun Lin, whose slaying grabbed national attention after his body was dismembered and parts were mailed to two Canadian cities.

Concordia University spokeswoman Clea Desjardins says the service will be held at a Montreal funeral home.

Lin studied computer science at the university, which is helping raise funds for his family and is setting up an award in his memory.

A public memorial was held last weekend in which his anguished mother talked about how the tragedy had devastated the family.

Lin's dismembered torso was found May 29 stuffed in a suitcase that had been dumped in the trash outside a Montreal apartment building.

The same day, one of his feet was discovered in a package mailed to the Conservative party in Ottawa and a hand was found in another package in a Canada Post warehouse in the national capital.

His other hand and foot were discovered on June 5 in packages mailed to two Vancouver schools. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The suspect

- Luka Rocco Magnotta, a small-time porn actor, was arrested June 4 in Berlin after an international manhunt.
- He was extradited to Montreal on June 18 and charged with Lin's first-degree murder the next day. He has pleaded not guilty

Greek athlete expelled over racist tweets

Track. Olympian's apologies come too late as politicians call for her removal

Triple jumper Voula Papachristou was expelled from Greece's Olympic team Wednesday for her comments on Twitter mocking African immigrants and expressing support for a far-right party.

The Hellenic Olympic Committee said Wednesday that Papachristou had been excluded from the team "for statements contrary to the values and ideas of the Olympic movement."

"It's the same as violating fair play," Isidoros Kouvelos, the head of Greece's Olympic mission, told Greece's Skai. "We are not here just to get medals, but to promote the Olympic ideals, to show our character."

Papachristou's Twitter account contained several retweets and links promoting the views of Golden Dawn, a formerly marginal extreme-right party.

Damage control

"We are not here just to get medals, but to promote the Olympic ideals."

Isidoros Kouvelos, head of Greece's Olympic mission

But it was her attempt at a joke Sunday that went viral. Commenting on the widely reported appearance of Nile-virus-carrying mosquitoes in Athens, Papachristou wrote: "With so many Africans in Greece, the West Nile mosquitoes will be getting home food!!!"

After the ensuing uproar, Greece's Olympic committee banned their athletes from using social media to express personal opinions.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Greece's Voula Papachristou at the women's triple-jump final at the European Athletics Championships in Helsinki, Finland. MATT DUNHAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

London Games. Saudi women will be first from their country to compete

The two women who will become the first female athletes to compete for Saudi Arabia at the Olympics have walked very different paths that will meet at the London Games.

One is a distance runner raised in California who has spent little time in Saudi Arabia but hopes to become a "big inspiration" for women in the kingdom, which severely restricts women in public life and effectively bans them from sports.

The other practices judo, but she has hardly ever left Saudi Arabia and has never competed.

While Sarah Attar was running cross-country for her high school in the United States, Wojdan Ali Seraj Abdulrahim Shahrkhani was watching judo on television and listening to her brothers talk about it.

Then one day she told her father, a judo coach and an international referee in the sport, that she wanted to train.

"She said, 'I want to be like you, I want to become very good,'" her father, Ali Seraj Abdulrahim Shahrkhani, told The Associated Press. "I said, 'OK, you want to train? I will coach you at home.'"

Saudi Arabia is allowing them to compete after the International Olympic Committee and human-rights groups put intense pressure on the kingdom to end its practice of sending all-male teams to the Olympics.

After Qatar and Brunei announced they would send women, Saudi Arabia would have been the only country with no women on the team. Instead, the London Games will be the first in Olympic history in which women are represented in every national delegation.

Women in Saudi Arabia cannot register for sports clubs or league competitions. They are banned from entering national trials, which makes it impossible for them to qualify for international competitions, including the Olympics.

Neither Attar or Shahrkhan technically qualified, but they received special invitations from the IOC "based on the quality of the athletes," IOC chief Jacques Rogge said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Olympic thrift

Egypt athletes sport knockoffs

The tracksuits and bags of Egypt's Olympic team are emblazoned with the familiar Nike and Adidas logos, and the country's committee chairman says that's good enough — even though they're fakes.

"We signed with a Chinese distributor in light of Egypt's economic situation," Gen. Mahmoud Ahmed Ali told The Associated Press Wednesday.

Ali said the real thing was just too expensive, and the state of Egypt's battered finances led him to opt for the counterfeit gear, which he said was "sufficient."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korea

Organizers apologize for flag display mix-up

London Olympic organizers mistakenly displayed the South Korean flag on a jumbo screen instead of North Korea's before a women's soccer match Wednesday, prompting the North Koreans to refuse to take the field for nearly an hour.

The flag flap began during player introductions when a North Korean player was introduced along with a shot of the South Korean flag.

The match against Colombia was delayed for more than an hour, and organizers apologized for the error. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SCHOLARSHIPSCANADA.com

Loblaw to open 700 Joe Fresh stores in the U.S.

Grocery chain.
Canadian brand announces partnership with U.S. retailer J.C. Penney as it ramps up its fashion line

Loblaw Companies Ltd. plans to unveil about 700 Joe Fresh stores in the U.S. next year as Canada's largest grocery chain works to ramp up sales of its hip fashion line to help bolster earnings that dropped by 19 per cent in its most recent quarter.

Loblaw's Joe Fresh clothing brand announced Wednesday it has formed a partnership with U.S. retailer J.C. Penney Co. to open 700 stores in the U.S. in 2013 that will run for four years.

Across Canada

Loblaw, a subsidiary of George Weston Ltd., operates more than 1,000 stores across Canada under numerous banners, including Great Canadian Super Store, Provigo, No Frills and Atlantic Superstore.

- The company employs 138,000 full- and part-time workers.

The move comes amid a massive overhaul of Loblaw's information-technology and supply-chain software system that is set to cost the company billions. The capital-intensive rollout, along with a hyper-competitive grocery market in Canada, has eaten into its bottom line.

Loblaw reported second-quarter net earnings of $159 million, or 56 cents per diluted share, down almost 19 per cent from the $197 million earned in the same period in 2011. That missed analysts' calls for earnings of 62 cents per share by five cents.

Shares fell 1.5 per cent, or 47 cents, to close at $31.45 on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

"While I'm not happy that earnings are down, we are on plan," said Loblaw president Vicente Trius on a conference call Wednesday.

Revenue came in at $7.37 billion for the period ended June 16, an increase of 1.3 per cent from the $7.28 billion over the second quarter of 2011. Retail sales and same-store sales grew 1.1 per cent and 0.2 per cent, respectively.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mountain Lion leaps to laptops

A customer looks at the new OS X Mountain Lion operating system at an Apple store in Palo Alto, Calif., Wednesday. Apple Inc. released its new operating system for Mac computers on Wednesday, with features borrowed from mobile devices and a tighter integration with online file storage. The new software narrows the gap between the PC and phone software packages, making Mac personal computers work more like iPhones and iPads. PAUL SAKUMA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR
98.5¢ (+0.5¢)

TSX
11,492.51 (+25.56)

OIL
$88.97 US (+47¢)

GOLD
$1,608.10 US (+$31.90)

Natural gas: $3.07 US (-11.7¢)
Dow Jones: 12,676.05 (+58.73)

Agriculture

Drought predicted to push food prices

The U.S. government is projecting the record drought gripping half the country will help push most food prices up three to four per cent next year, with beef prices expected to see the biggest jump at four to five per cent. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A PREVIEW OF OLYMPIC PROPORTIONS

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca/hesays

How will London cope this week as it's hit with pollution, traffic congestion and rabid media attention for the first time in history?

This and other questions will be answered as the Triple-X Olympiad officially gets underway Friday. We don't trust you to watch the right events and have the proper emotional reaction to them, so here's a list of the biggest storylines we demand you watch for.

Are they ready? The Olympics are home to some dependable traditions, and one of the most consistent is the Lamenting of the Games. Before every Olympics, the media make it sound like the runners will have their times slowed by wet cement and divers will be jumping into empty swimming pools, their falls broken by contractors desperately trying to get the host city ready.

In London, the biggest problem appears to be security, which was thrown into shambles when it was revealed that a key security firm didn't have enough people and was handing out sashes that said "hall monitor" to anybody who asked.

Now they've called in the army, because nothing makes people feel secure like soldiers in the streets.

If things work out, the media will call it a miracle of Olympic proportions. If things don't work out, the media will call it a catastrophe of Olympic proportions. (We're on tight deadlines.)

Open questions. The opening ceremony has become an important show of national pride for the host country. Can Britain's gymnasts and interpretive dancers do justice to Britain's food, emotion and weather? One organizer gave a tantalizing hint when he promised "more shades of grey than you've ever seen."

All-time record? If American swimmer Michael Phelps dominates, he'll become the most decorated Olympian ever. This will be a major embarrassment for Canada, because Phelps will surpass the total distance travelled by Canada's submarine fleet.

Hoop dreams. It promises to be a special moment when the world puts aside its differences, joins hands and prays for the humiliating defeat of the U.S. basketball team. The chance to cheer against Kobe Bryant and LeBron James simultaneously is rare and should be cherished.

Star watch. World-famous athletes won't be the only celebrities, as entertainment superstars descend on London including uber-couple Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. Watch for North Korean athletes to wander near Jolie in hopes she'll adopt them.

Whither Canada? Sportswriters went all gooey during the Vancouver Games about how Canada had finally come of age — just like we did during Vimy Ridge, the Second World War, Expo '67, Summit Series '72 and that "Joe Canadian" Molson commercial. I thought that was mostly hooey because Canada won the most gold medals; it's easy to stand up loud and proud when you're winning. Since Canada doesn't do as well at the Summer Olympics, here's our big chance to reveal our true patriotism. Otherwise we're just Phoenix Coyotes fans on a playoff run.

That said, I trust we'll see lots of Canadians standing on the podium. Assuming it's constructed on time.

Britain's government opted Tuesday to deploy 1,200 more troops to protect Olympic venues, a move that reflects a lack of confidence in a private security contractor. But let's not stop there. There's much more cause for concern — too much to keep track of — so we highlight the best of the worst. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Travelling in London an Olympic sport?

CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Summer Games

VIP lanes, the Tube cause delays

Wednesday saw an uncertain test of the British capital's Olympic transport plan, as lanes reserved for Olympic VIPs came into force two days before the start of the Games and the city's creaky subway system struggled with glitches.

Traffic jams blocked some of the main routes into the city as the wildly unpopular "Games Lanes" took effect. The 48 kilometres of lanes are to operate from 6 a.m. to midnight throughout the Games, and cars or taxi cabs that stray into them face a $200 US fine.

Thousands of London drivers have switched to public transport, only to encounter severe delays on several underground subway lines caused by power-supply problems and signal failures. Severe delays were reported Wednesday on the city's Central and Hammersmith subway lines.

Transportation is London's weak spot: Traffic often clogs up on its narrow, historic roads, bus schedules can change at a moment's notice, and the famous Underground suffers from daily delays and infrastructure that in parts is more than a century old.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Criticism over designation

- The International Olympic Committee had specifically demanded VIP road lanes be created after learning lessons from previous Games.
- In London, some of the loudest opposition to the Olympic VIP lanes has come from the city's cabbies, who have staged two recent demonstrations that brought central London traffic to a standstill. They say being banned from Olympic lanes jeopardizes their business.

Hanging on a wire

Cable car stranded above Thames

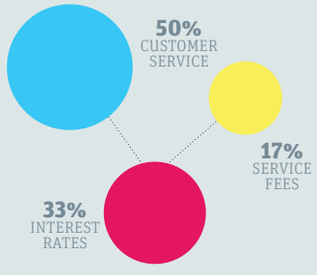
Cable-car passengers got plenty of time to view London's sights after the system linking two Olympic venues broke down and left them stranded above the River Thames Wednesday.

The cable-car system, dubbed the Emirates Air Line, opened last month and links the 02 Arena in Greenwich — which will host Olympic basketball and gymnastics — and the ExCel exhibition centre, where boxing will take place. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What's the most important factor in choosing a bank?



Twitter

@beaumontpete: - nothing gets people to fork over money quicker than when you say "I'm going to Timmies, do you want anything?" @TimHortons

@dwayner15: London police learn to direct traffic. Ive been at this corner for 7mins #LdnOnt

@Tony_Curcio: I managed to beat the #ldnont #construction party going on today. This is getting ridiculous.

@spankules: The idea of abusing charitable status to avoid paying your share of taxes sickens me. Shut down tax shelters. #ldnont #cdnpoli #onpoli

@Aaronsprimed: Is it just me or does #ldnont purposefully schedule Pride a month late, then puts a big rock fest at the same time, to shoo it away?

metro

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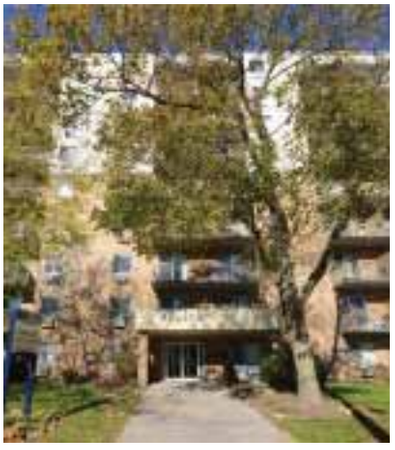

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Ben Benedict stands with pieces by Scott McEwan on display at the ARTS Project as part of Pride London. AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO

Art show a matter of Pride

Personal pondering. Artists asked to reflect what festival means to them for 2012 exhibit

BACKSTAGE PASS
Amanda Grant
london@metronews.ca

Since 1992, one of Pride London's regular events has been an art exhibition. As the festival celebrates 30 years in the Forest City, co-curators Ben Benedict and Gene Timpany ask artists "what does Pride mean to you?"

The exhibit, hosted at the ARTS Project on Dundas Street, is a celebration of sexual diversity, inclusion and unity through sculpture, paint and mixed-media. Every artist is a member or friend of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and two-spirited community.

Originally started by HALO, Pride London was re-imagined as an independent organization in 2002. It was that year, two weeks before the festivities began, that Benedict found out about the exhibition.

To his surprise, the gallery had been booked a year in advance, Benedict said. The local artist didn't want the opportunity to go to waste so he rounded up some friends and put together a show, continuing the tradition.

Ten years later, Benedict has stepped back. He has moved away from a curatorial role, moving toward a juried art exhibit format.

"We work with people across the region," Benedict said. "This exhibit is about craftsmanship and quality."

The jury is composed of an artist, a gallery director and a supportive member of the community. All the submissions are evaluated and artists handpicked for the exhibit.

"Every artist makes something different and creative," Benedict said. "They are all fascinating people."

This year 17 artists will present their work, including Bruce Flowers, one of the artists who started the show in 1992, Steven Kato, a deaf and blind artist who has won awards for his work and Benedict himself.

"I haven't participated as an artist in a number of years," Benedict said. "But I made the decision to submit for the anniversary year."

Benedict's piece speaks specifically to the anniversary, as well as the time when he first came out.

"The piece is a bull's-eye with pride colours, but I used layers of imagery," Benedict said. "I have a picture of me and my partner and another image of Matthew Shepard's memorial out in the dessert, because that's what I was going through when I came out."

There is an opening reception for the Pride art exhibition tonight from 7 to 10 p.m. at the ARTS Project. The exhibit will be on display until Aug. 4 during regular gallery hours. For more information visit artsproject.ca.

Around town

- **Music.** The Jezebels perform with former Londoner's Hue and locals Lonnie in the Garden Friday night at APK Live. Tickets are $10 in advance at Grooves or The Early Bird. Show starts at 9 p.m.
- **Musicals.** The musical movie marathon is on at the Palace Theatre on Dundas Street. From Friday to Sunday catch The Wizard of Oz, Sound of Music, Singing in the Rain and Cabaret, amongst the 12-film lineup. Tickets are $5 a flick or $25 for them all, available at the door.

2 SCENE

On the web

TV's Sister Wives family challenges Utah bigamy law as unconstitutional

Read metro work every Monday and Wednesday for tips and trends in education and employment.

Only in Metro. News worth sharing.

Watch for another level of camaraderie in new flick

Emotional connection. Big cast has big friendships in new comedy about an alien invasion of suburban Ohio

Ben Stiller, Johnny Pemberton and Jonah Hill star in The Watch. MELINDA SUE GORDON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

One of the benefits of doing an ensemble comedy is catching up with old friends. At least, that's how it was on The Watch for Ben Stiller and Vince Vaughn, who co-star with Jonah Hill and Richard Ayoade as concerned citizens investigating what turns out to be an alien invasion in their suburban Ohio neighbourhood.

Stiller and Vaughn previously squared off in Dodgeball, but here they're playing something a bit chummier.

"I love working with these guys. It's great to work with the people who make you laugh and who are funnier," Stiller admits. "Vince and I had a really fun time working on Dodgeball together and it was exciting to have a chance to do something. It had been a while for us, so it was exciting to have a chance to do something new together."

Reunions aside, Stiller also enjoyed letting loose in a comedy that didn't have the same restrictions as his more family-friendly fare.

"The fun thing for me is to be a part of a movie where you don't have to worry," Stiller admits. "Being in an R-rated film, you can have a lot more freedom."

And that freedom doesn't just mean more violence and cursing, but it extends to how the characters are depicted as well, as the four men aren't forced into learning some sort of lesson or personal growth.

"I don't think it was about having it all sort of tied up in bow. It was more about these guys hanging out and how they affected each other, but it wasn't like about teaching lessons or anything," Stiller says. "I do think there is sort of, you know, an emotional connection these guys do have by ending up being together."

While Stiller, Vaughn and Hill are familiar faces to comedy audiences, the forth member of their neighbourhood watch might not be: British actor and director Richard Ayoade, who directed last year's Submarine (executive-produced by Stiller), admits he felt like he stuck out a bit in the cast.

"I've never been in a film, not really," Ayoade admits. "My wife said — and she's right — it's going to look like I won a competition to be in a film with movie stars. And there were several days when I was like, 'Why are Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn and Jonah Hill looking at me? Oh! I'm in a scene with them. I ought to start trying to act back.' It's very surreal and I'm a huge fan of these people. It was a great pleasure for me to get to somewhat bring down the film by being in it."

Vaughn, of course, thinks Ayoade's self-deprecation is misplaced.

"Richard is so funny. It was so fun, he brought such an original voice and great ideas and is just funny in the movie," Vaughn says. "You get a bunch of guys together from different walks of life and at the end of the day there's a lot of laughter and a lot of camaraderie."

The Watch

Vince Vaughn adjusting to being a parent

- **Daughters.** In The Watch, Vince Vaughn's character has a rather argumentative relationship with an unruly teenage daughter trying to grow up too fast. In real life, Vaughn has just welcomed his first daughter. So did the movie give him any premonitions of troubles to come? "My daughter is just 19, 20 months now, so I'm along away from that," he admits. "Thankfully I'm a long, long way from answering any of those questions as far as being protective. But I have encouraged her to get on some scooters — motor scooters — motorized vehicles. That kind of stuff. I threw her in the pool, but she swam so it's fine."

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Johnny Depp, left, as Tonto, a spirit warrior on a personal quest, who joins forces in a fight for justice with Armie Hammer, as John Reid, a lawman who has become a masked avenger in the Lone Ranger. PETER MOUNTAIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lone Ranger remains a sore spot for some

Gyasi Ross grew up decades after the Lone Ranger aired on TV, but his friends would still call him Tonto when they teased him.

"Everybody understands who Tonto is, even if we hadn't seen the show, and we understood it wasn't a good thing," said Ross, a member of the Blackfeet Nation in Montana who lives and has family in the Suquamish Tribe, outside Seattle.

"Why else would you tease someone with that?"

The making of a new Lone Ranger Disney movie, and the announcement that Johnny Depp is playing sidekick Tonto, have reawakened feelings about a character that has drawn much criticism over the years as being a Hollywood creation guilty of spreading stereotypes.

The film is still in production, but Indian Country has been abuzz about it for months, with many sharing opinions online and a national Native publication running an occasional series on the topic.

Some Native Americans welcome the new movie, which is slated for release next summer. Parts were filmed on the Navajo Nation with the tribe's support, and an Oklahoma tribe recently made Depp an honorary member.

But for others, the Lone Ranger represents a lingering sore spot — one that goes back to the 1950s television version of Tonto, who spoke in broken English, wore buckskin and lacked any real cultural traits.

Depp's role attracted particular attention in April when producer Jerry Bruckheimer tweeted a picture of the actor in his Tonto costume. He had on black and white face paint, an intense gaze, a black bird attached to his head and plenty of decorative feathers.

"The moment it hit my Facebook newsfeed, the updates from my friends went nutso," wrote Natanya Ann Pulley, a doctorate student at University of Utah, in an essay for the online magazine McSweeney's.

For Pulley and her friends, the portrayal of Native Americans in Western movies is getting old.

"I'm worried about the Tonto figure becoming a parody or a commercialized figure that doesn't have any dimension or depth. Or consideration for contemporary context of Native Americans," she said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

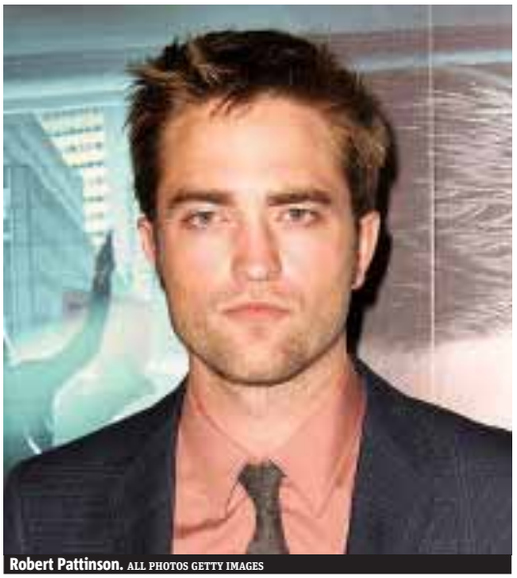
Quote

"I'm worried about the Tonto figure becoming a parody or a commercialized figure that doesn't have any dimension or depth."

Natanya Ann Pulley

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES



Robert Pattinson. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Pattinson talks cheating

Robert Pattinson obviously won't be releasing a statement — he'll let some pretty young blond do the talking next week. So for now, all we've got is his April chat in Vanity Fair, where he conveniently discussed affairs.

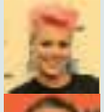
"There's a thing I've never got: That is, why do people cheat? I can understand the impulse," he says.

"But not how you can keep two relationships going at the same time for long. I'm not the casual-affair kind of guy. If I choose to be with someone, it's because I really want it. When I have a relationship, I'm 100 per cent into it."

Twitter

@katyperry
I always love seeing one single piece of confetti fall at an indie show.

@JimCarrey
The violence within us is being fully exploited by the gun sellers in America.Let's end r addiction and entitlement to violence.



@Pink
As far as I'm concerned- Christmas prep has started. And I'm also now a member of the QVC. For real? Yes- For real. Yaye!!!!! Help!!!!!!!!

@ActuallyNPH
My favorite thing about Paris is the 'double kiss on the cheek' greeting. It is both intimate and disarming. I'm totally stealing that.

The Word

Kristen Stewart 'deeply sorry' about affair

MONICA WEYMOUTH
scene@metronews.ca

We always blamed Kristen Stewart's ever-present pout on her distaste for photographers. Maybe an extra weird rash. Possibly a Spanx situation. But we never suspected that the problem could be Robert Pattinson, her much more photogenic boyfriend and Twilight co-star.

It seems, however, that while Stewart's been parading down red carpets with Pattinson, she's also been having a fling with Rupert Sanders, her married Snow White and the Huntsman director.

Us Weekly has pretty incriminating photographs of the two snuggled up to each other in Los Angeles on July 17, just a few days before Stewart and Pattinson attended the Teen Choice Awards together.

Witnesses tell RadarOnline that Sanders, 41, and Stewart, 22, "were hardly able to keep their hands off one another," as they drove around L.A., stopping occasionally to make out in parking lots.

Kristen, what do you have to say for yourself?
"I'm deeply sorry for the hurt and embarrassment I've caused to those close to me and everyone this has affected," she said in a statement released yesterday.

"This momentary indiscretion has jeopardized the most important thing in my life, the person I love and respect the most, Rob. I love him, I love him, I'm so sorry."

Kris, take it from us: Making creepy, inappropriate public appeals to Robert Pattinson in the gossip columns doesn't work. We've been trying for years, and he doesn't bite.

Rupert Sanders

Sanders' wife not warned

Not to be outdone, Rupert Sanders issued his own apology shortly after Stewart.

"I am utterly distraught about the pain I have caused my family," the director said in a statement. "My beautiful wife and heavenly children are all I have in this world. I love them with all my heart. I am praying that we can get through this together."

As for Sanders' wife, Liberty Ross, we doubt she's accepting the apology anytime soon. The British model seemed to learn about the affair along with everyone else yesterday, and proceeded to have a mini Twitter meltdown.

Before deactivating her account, she followed @Us Weekly and tweeted quotes from Marilyn Monroe and Maya Angelou, then signed off with a simple "Wow" — the 2012 equivalent of waking up to the Love Actually DVD menu in a puddle of Ben and Jerry's.

'I did not cuss Janet out'

The dispute between members of the Jackson family over the location of matriarch Katherine Jackson apparently came to a head this week with an altercation between family members on the grounds of their Calabasas, Calif., estate, according to TMZ.

Janet, Jermaine and Randy Jackson stormed the house to confront the children of the late Michael Jackson — Prince, Paris and Blanket, leading to cursing and blows. The adults then reportedly attempted to coerce the kids into going to Arizona — where their legal guardian, Katherine, is resting — against their will.

The ongoing troubles have prompted lawyers for Michael's estate to write an open letter expressing their concern.

"We are concerned that we do what we can to protect them from undue influences, bullying, greed and other unfortunate circumstances," executors John Branca and John McClain say in the letter.

Meanwhile, Paris Jackson took to Instagram to refute claims of a fight, posting, "Dear TMZ, no one slapped anyone, and I did not cuss Janet out."

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Retro-inspired looks were seen throughout the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Swim 2013 in Miami Beach, where more than two dozen designers showcased their latest collections. Swimstyle specialists took a nod from days gone by, from high waist briefs and the pinup girl look of the 1950s to the Studio 54 and Dolce Vita eras of the '60s and '70s. Dive right in!

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Splash from the past

WHITE SANDS AUSTRALIA

Romantic looks were seen on the runway at White Sands Australia. "It's very, very girly," said designer Leah Madden. "I always try to do things very pretty but sexy and with an edge. But this year it's more pretty and more feminine."

Madden kept it simple for The Violet Hour collection. She used touches of ruffles, neon pastel colours (green) and a vintage floral print with large violets over a white palette to create the blissful looks.

DOLORES CORTES

Miami Beach was the inspiration for Spanish designer Dolores Cortes, who used vitamin colours and a touch of neon in her sophisticated collection.

Golden reflective laminates were superimposed on some pieces, while others had a mix of animal prints and bright stains to give the wild yet chic look. There were a ton of prints, some with a tie-dye effect. Bikinis included a multi-coloured bandeau top with an animal print bottom. Multiple patterns took over a one-piece and a monikini with bright pops of colour, and crochet and mesh also made appearances.

LISA BLUE

Kicking off swim week was the Lisa Blue collection, where Australian designer Lisa Burke featured a collection of very different styles.

The Enchantress collection opened the show with a white monokini with gold trimmings. The blue colour of the ocean was also seen on the goddess-like models walking slowly — enchantedly — down the runway.

Karina Smirnoff of Dancing with the Stars picked up the pace as she danced in a bright pink, ruffled-top bikini and a Flamenco-style long skirt for the second Flamenco-inspired collection, which included a one-shoulder bikini top with ruffles on the bottom piece.

NICOLITA

The Nicolita collection can be described as a collection of sexy swimwear with curve-flattering styles reminiscent of Cuba's alluring 1940s era — but with a California twist.

The Havana Nights Collection by designer Nicole Di Rocco drew inspiration from her Cuban roots and experiences in Malibu with the help of singer Christina Milian, who said finding the right fabrics was more difficult than she had expected.

The collection had plenty of coverups that can transition from day to night, including a short layered animal-print skirt and high waisted blue pants.

ALL PHOTOS: J PAT CARTER / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AGUA BENDITA

Cropped jackets with military hardware or maritime accents were part of the Lovely Heroes collection for Agua Bendita. Designers Catalina Alvarez and Mariana Hinestroza wanted to pay homage to the 700 men and women who work on each of the hand-made garments in Colombia.

The collection included military, maritime, cowboy and neon-inspired styles that were embellished with beads, appliques and sequins. The AB logo was emblazoned on the espadrilles the models wore and a hot pink plastic handbag that opened the show.

RED CARTER

The story of Red Carter's life and recent move from Miami to New York City inspired his latest collection, which included shiny disco balls and chunky geometric heels.

The art deco looks included black and white pieces in architectural shapes and a hint of vintage feeling with geometric hairstyles. There was a tangerine deep-V ruffle one-piece and art deco-inspired demi-underwire and skirted hipster bottom. Many had hints of glitter or gold such as in the black and white "glitter bomb" monikini.

The second part, the "Brazilesque with disco balls" looks included a safari bandeau and hipster bottom, a black handkerchief bandeau and safari hipster bottom.

On the Web

Abby Larson, editor and founder of the stylish wedding website, on making your celebration Pinterest gold.

A prescription for chocoholics

"This book is really an extension of our first book, which was Bite Me," says Julie Albert, who collaborated with her sister, Lisa Gnat, on Bite Me Too. "We grew up with a mom who was an incredible cook so every night we had a feast and Lisa was the one following her around in the kitchen saying, 'What can I help with?' and I was the one upstairs calling, 'What time is dinner?"'

"When I had kids of my own I quickly discovered that noodles and butter weren't going to cut it for life. I really had to learn how to cook and Lisa taught me everything I know, and now I throw dinners every week for at least 20 people at a time," she added.

Gnat, 39, says she has always enjoyed recipe development, but it was not until she took a one-year pastry chef course at George Brown College that she really understood the science behind putting ingredients together.

"Lisa and I are the perfect team. In our books, Lisa does all the recipe development and I do the writing and the look of the books, so together we bring our skills and we make a fun, family-time meal," says Albert.

Albert and Gnat spend a lot of time in the kitchen creating and testing recipes, but they also like to be pampered by their families.

Ingredients

- 4 squares unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- 175 ml (3/4 cup) butter
- 500 ml (2 cups) sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 250 ml (1 cup) flour

Fudge Frosting

- 125 ml (1/2 cup) sugar
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) cocoa powder, sifted
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) milk
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) butter
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) corn syrup
- 250 ml (1 cup) icing sugar

Rx Brownies With Fudge Frosting

This recipe is ideal for a post-brunch dessert. THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

These Rx Brownies With Fudge Frosting are great for when you want to sit back and get the little ones involved.

The decadent brownies, found in Bite Me, are a prescription for any chocoholic, say Albert and Gnat. They would make an ideal treat to cap a brunch or any time you need a chocolate fix.

1. Heat oven to 180 C (350 F). Coat a 33-by-23-cm (13-by-9-inch) baking pan with non-stick cooking spray. Line with parchment paper.

2. For the brownies, in a microwave safe bowl, combine chocolate and butter. Melt on high heat for 1 minute, stir and melt for 30 seconds more or until chocolate and butter are melted and smooth.

3. In bowl, whisk sugar and eggs. Add chocolate mixture and flour, stirring until flour has disappeared. Spread in prepared pan and bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes before removing. Cool completely on wire rack before frosting.

4. Frosting: In a large saucepan, mix together sugar, cocoa powder, milk, butter and corn syrup. Heat to boiling, stirring frequently. Boil for 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Let cool for 10 minutes. Whisk in icing sugar until smooth. THE CANADIAN PRESS/BITE ME TOO BY JULIE ALBERT AND LISA GNAT

Book of the week

Take a bite out of easy & fun food

Having fun with food, family and friends is the focus of the cookbook Bite Me Too by sisters Julie Albert and Lisa Gnat.

The release is peppered with humour, trivia, pop culture references and user-friendly recipes that feature ingredients you have in your pantry or that can be picked up during your regular grocery store run.

Chapter headings in Bite Me Too include Amuse Me (appetizers), Fowl Me (poultry), Hook Me (fish and seafood) and Toss Me (salads). There are 176 recipes in total.

As well as easy-to-follow recipes, the book includes a chapter on how to throw easy and original parties for family and guests. There are photos showing how to create a themed atmosphere using items picked up at craft stores, THE CANADIAN PRESS

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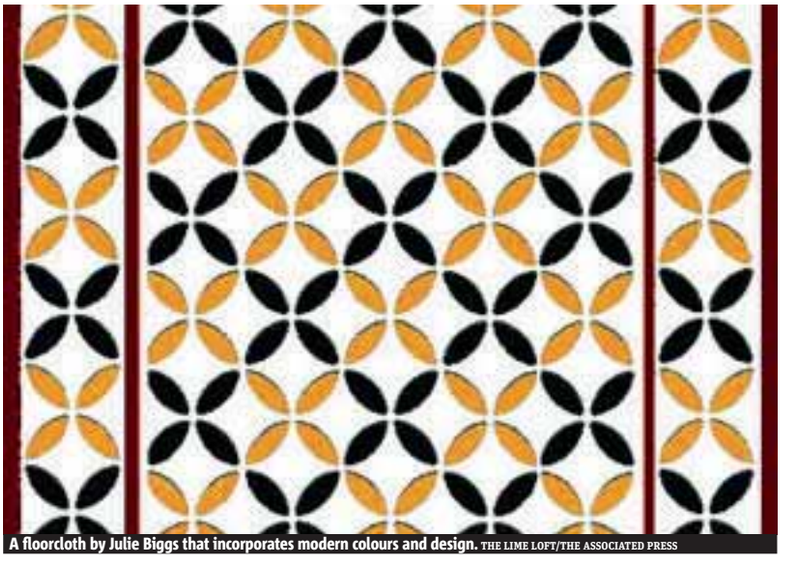

A floorcloth by Julie Biggs that incorporates modern colours and design. THE LIME LOFT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

17th Century decor revival

Trends. Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and George Adams had floorcloths in their homes and you can too

If you were the artistic wife of a sailor back in 17th Century France, you didn't let modest means deter you from decorating your home in style.

You transformed your husband's old sails into beautifully painted floor coverings that rivaled those in wealthy homes. British sailors started bringing them back as souvenirs, and a fad with impressive reach and longevity was born.

The heavy canvases — called oilcloths in Britain and floorcloths when the art came to North America — were painted with simple or elaborate designs depending on the skill level of the artists (often house painters) and the financial status of homeowners. The term oilcloth probably refers to the oil-based paints and linseed oil coatings applied to the canvases.

Waterproof, insect resistant and sturdy, floorcloths became just as popular in American homes. Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and John Adams had floorcloths in their homes; you can still see one at Mount Vernon — a solid green, as Washington sought to simulate the grass outdoors inside.

Near the start of the 20th Century, the advent of mass-produced linoleum sent labour-intensive floorcloths out of style, but in the '60s and again more recently, artists have rediscovered the craft.

Julie Biggs of Pickerington, Ohio, paints hers with contemporary designs like polka dots or naif flowers in hues of pink, turquoise, yellow and charcoal grey. A green polka dot rug would look fresh and young in a child's room, for example. She's playing with other ideas, too.

"My favourite technique right now is a layered, worn look, which includes several layers of designs on one floorcloth," Biggs says. "Once I'm finished painting each layer, I sand off some of the top to let the sub-layers peek through. It gives the floorcloth a warm, loved look that's very charming. Recently, I've been inspired by the colours and designs of modern fabrics and quilts."

Weathersfield, Vt.-based Lisa Curry Mair crafts her rugs in a 200-year-old farmhouse adorned with many of her creations. She brings a love of history, children's book illustrations and mathematics to her designs.

A mariner's compass, an artichoke and a woven, cane-like pattern are among her bestsellers, and she also does custom designs. The hardest thing to get across, she says, is how durable the pieces are, and that's largely due to the number of "hobby" crafters producing inferior product.

"They use lightweight canvas, cheap paint and finishes. A floorcloth in a high-traffic kitchen should stand up to dogs, kids and all kinds of abuse," Mair says.

A good heavy floorcloth should lie flat with no bumps or ripples, she says. "When I make floorcloths for museums, they must stand up to 30,000 visitors a year walking on them."

Lucia Blum of Wilmington, N.C., gives rugs a folk-art look. Cat Nap features a black and white cat surrounded by the stuff of cat dreams: goldfish, birds and mice. Bunny romps on a green field circled by carrots and radishes.

Artist Faith Wilson, who will be showing at the American Craft Exposition in Evanston, Ill., in August, takes a painterly approach to her often haunting, evocative canvases. Gingko leaves, conifers and little black birds inhabit softly hued, sepia-washed backgrounds.

If you're interested in trying your hand at the floorcloth craft yourself, HGTV's website offers instructions. Mair's website has a how-to video plus a supplies shop.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"A floorcloth in a high-traffic kitchen should stand up to dogs, kids and all kinds of abuse."

Lisa Curry Mair, contemporary floorcloth crafter

NHL

Bettman lays out league's proposal

Donald Fehr and the NHL players have a little more to mull over.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said the league tabled the remaining elements of its opening contract offer to the NHL Players' Association on Wednesday. It was an expansion on the opening proposal the league delivered July 13, which included a decreased share of hockey-related revenue, term limits on contracts and a 22 per cent salary rollback.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Steve Staios joins Leafs front office

It came a bit out of the blue when Leafs GM Brian Burke approached Steve Staios last season to let the Islanders defenceman know he had a future in the Maple Leafs front office when his playing days were over.

Well, Staios took Burke up on his offer.

Staios filed his retirement papers, ending an 18-year career, and officially signed up Wednesday with the Maple Leafs to become the team's player-development advisor.

"I'm thankful they have the confidence in me to move right in," said Staios.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Steve Staios
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Ernie Els speaks at a press conference next to the Claret Jug trophy Wednesday at the Hamilton Golf and County Club in Ancaster, Ont. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Els hopes to add to his trophy haul

Golf. British Open winner has had little time to practise ahead of Canadian Open

Ernie Els arrived at the RBC Canadian Open with one trophy already in tow. He's hoping to leave with another.

Despite a whirlwind couple days that followed his victory at the British Open, Els expressed confidence that he's still got enough left in the tank to be competitive at the third-oldest championship in golf.

"I feel very fresh," he said Wednesday afternoon.

Els only managed to get in five practice holes at Hamilton Golf and Country Club this week, but thinks his stellar play from Royal Lytham and St. Annes should carry over.

The celebration following his fourth major championship was more low key than the ones that came before it. After pulling out a one-shot victory over Adam Scott on Sunday, he returned home to London for a small party with family and friends, then had a lazy Monday.

He travelled to Hamilton, Ont., on Tuesday morning, getting in a quick practice session before a helicopter arrived to whisk him to downtown Toronto for a "Right to Play" dinner. On Wednesday, Els played a round with RBC CEO Gord Nixon at his home course.

The itinerary left virtually no time for preparation at the charming, tree-lined Hamilton layout that is hosting the Canadian Open for a fifth time.

"I don't know if it's such a big disadvantage because a lot of times when you don't play a course, you don't know where the trouble is," Els said with a chuckle. "So maybe that's a good thing. You get your yardage, you hit it to your spots."

As an added bonus, the South African brought the Claret Jug along for the ride and proudly displayed it during his interview session with reporters Wednesday. His presence added some buzz to an event that remains in a tough spot on the PGA Tour's calendar. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Taking part

- Besides Els, the biggest names in the field are Matt Kuchar, Hunter Mahan and Jim Furyk — and it's no coincidence that all four men have sponsorship agreements with RBC.
- However, Furyk said he was also drawn back by the traditional H.S. Colt-designed course where he won the first of his two Canadian Open titles in 2006.

MLB. Cal Ripken Jr.'s mom safe after abduction

Cal Ripken Jr.'s 74-year-old mother was found with her hands bound in the back seat of her car Wednesday after being kidnapped at gunpoint a day earlier at her home outside Baltimore and driven around blindfolded by her abductor, police and neighbours said.

Investigators do not know the kidnapper's motive and there was no ransom demand for Vi Ripken's release, Aberdeen police Chief Henry Trabert said at a news conference.

The gunman forced Ripken into her silver Lincoln Continental between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. Tuesday, police said. She was found bound and unharmed but shaken at about 6:15 a.m. Wednesday near her home in Aberdeen, about 48 kilometres northeast of Baltimore.

Asked if police believe the kidnapper knew who he was abducting, Trabert did not answer, saying police don't know the motive or if the suspect has any ties to the Ripken family. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"He lit cigarettes for her, they stopped for food."

Vi Ripken's next-door neighbour Gus Kowaleski, who added that she said the gunman told her he would not hurt her

MLB

Phillies, Hamels agree to deal

Cole Hamels and the Philadelphia Phillies have agreed to a $144-million US, six-year contract that prevents the 2008 World Series MVP from becoming a free agent after the season.

A source told The Associated Press about the deal on condition of anonymity because there has been no official announcement.

It's the second-largest contract for a pitcher behind the $161-million deal the New York Yankees gave CC Sabathia in December 2008.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB. Miami sends Hanley Ramirez to L.A.

The Marlins are trading stars, just like they did following their championships in 2003 and 2007. Team president David Samson says this exodus is different.

"A fire sale, I guess, comes after a World Series victory," he said Wednesday. "I don't know how you would call it a fire sale to trade players of a team that's underperforming so spectacularly. We are just doing everything we can to win more games."

Former NL batting champion Hanley Ramirez became the latest player to leave, traded to the Los Angeles Dodgers with left-handed reliever Randy Choate for right-hander Nathan Eovaldi and minor-league pitcher Scott McGough.

On Monday, the Marlins sent pitcher Anibal Sanchez and infielder Omar Infante to the Detroit Tigers for pitching prospect Jacob Turner and two minor leaguers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hanley Ramirez GETTY IMAGES FILE

4 SPORTS

Mobile sports

A day after matching the Philadelphia Flyers' $110-million US offer sheet for Shea Weber, the Nashville Predators were in celebration mode. But "the biggest signing in franchise history" for Nashville has forced the Flyers back to the drawing board. Scan the code for the story.

Despatie facing biggest Olympic challenge yet

Diving. But 27-year-old from Laval, Que., envisions 'better-than-ever' results despite recent head injury

Alexandre Despatie has never been the type to shy way from challenges. And more often than not, he's overcome them.

But on the eve of his fourth Olympics, the veteran diver admits the London Games will be the biggest challenge of his career.

Despatie, 27, is coming off a tough year. He missed most of 2011 because of bursitis and tendinitis in his left knee.

And last month, he had a brush with disaster when he hit his head on the board while training in Spain.

Quoted

"Being injured is one thing, hurting is another.... When the head isn't there properly, it's difficult to turn the page and get back to positive thoughts."
Alexandre Despatie

The deep cut on the forehead as well as the concussion he suffered nearly derailed his latest Olympic dreams.

As a result, Despatie will have to surpass himself if he is to add to his Olympic medal total.

"I have a big challenge in front of me but I'm going to the Games to do better than ever," he told The Canadian Press. "And that's what the Olympics are all about — the desire to surpass oneself. I usually overcome challenges and that's what I'm going to do."

The three-time world champion and two-time Olympic medal-winner knows what he is talking about.

Four months before the Beijing Games in 2008, Despatie fractured his foot in an injury that prevented him from training in the run-up to the Olympics. Then, once in China, he suffered back pains that had him fearing the worst.

In the end, however, he still won silver in the three-metre dive.

"Mentally, it was super difficult," he said. "Healing physically isn't enough. You've got to get your confidence back."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada can't keep up with world champion in opener

Soccer. Coach Herdman calls loss to Japan a learning experience

Canada's women's soccer team opened its London Olympic campaign with a 2-1 loss to Japan on Wednesday, a result that left coach John Herdman "scratching one side" of his head and "feeling OK on the other."

Melissa Tancredi scored the lone goal for the No. 7 Canadians, who managed to battle back against the reigning World Cup champion. Japan took a 2-0 lead into halftime and had the Canadians on their heels most of the night.

"We knew it was going to be a tough game tonight; they're world champions and world champions for a reason," Herdman said afterward.

"But it's the first game in the tournament, there's another five to go for us hopefully, and I think we've learned some lessons tonight."

The game marked Canada's first competition of the Games, two days before the opening ceremonies in London.

The Canadians need to finish top-two in their pool — or be one of the two best third-place teams — to advance to the quarter-finals of the 12-team tournament.

The Japanese squad that shocked the United States to win the World Cup last summer lived up to its billing, passing and moving with speed and precision.

"They're quick, they're crafty, they get in those tight little spaces that you don't think they can get into," said defender Lauren Sesselmann. "They're an incredible team."

Nahomi Kawasumi and team captain Aya Miyama scored for Japan.

Kawasumi sprinted onto a clever back-heel pass from Shinobu Ohno in the 33rd minute. Miyama scored on a header from a cross in the 44th minute to beat Canadian goalkeeper Erin McLeod.

Tancredi capitalized on the one really decent shot Canada had, connecting on a cross from Rhian Wilkinson in the 55th minute.

"At 2-0 down anything could have happened, we could easily have let the game go," said Canada's star striker Christine Sinclair. "But I think in the second half we came out and played pretty well. Gives us some confidence and in terms of goal difference, not a bad result against them."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's Christine Sinclair, left, and Japan's Azusa Iwashimizu battle for the ball in Coventry on Wednesday. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hesjedal's 'one-man show' arrives in London

Canadian cyclist Ryder Hesjedal arrives at St. Pancras King's Cross train station in London on Wednesday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ryder Hesjedal arrived at the Olympics to a crowd Wednesday. But the Giro d'Italia winner will largely be on his own Saturday in the men's road race.

While world champion Mark Cavendish can rely on the help of four British teammates, the 31-year-old from Victoria will be going it alone as Canada did not collect enough points to qualify any other riders.

But the focus was on Hesjedal on Wednesday as he walked into a Canadian media crush at St. Pancras International after getting off a train from Europe.

Quoted

"They've clearly shown how strong they are. They're going to take the initiative, they're going to control the race. So it will be everyone against them."

Ryder Hesjedal on the British cycling team led by Mark Cavendish and Tour de France winner Bradley Wiggins

The six-foot-two, 159-pound Hesjedal arrived wheeling one of his own Cervelo bikes, neatly packaged in a giant canvas bag. His other rides had been shipped ahead of time.

The laid-back Hesjedal, under the spotlight at his third Olympics, did his best to take all the attention in stride.

"It's exciting. This is a little overwhelming," said the former mountain biker. "But I've been training and focusing on this event. We'll see how I do Saturday and following in the time trial."

Hesjedal had fellow Canadians Michael Barry and Svein Tuft on his side at the 2008 Games road race in Beijing, where Barry was eighth, Hesjedal 55th and Tuft 58th. But he will have to look to others to help him this time.

This time he is, in his words, "a one-man show." A good scenario for him is being part of a small group that breaks away from the field early.

"I can ride with a small group and there won't be many guys with teammates at that point," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Doping

Nine banned as Games approach

Nine track athletes were suspended ahead of the London Olympics for doping, including three who were caught in retests of samples from last year's world championships, the IAAF said Wednesday.

The governing body said six were caught in biological passport tests, which measure changes in an athlete's blood profile. The others were sanctioned after retroactive testing of blood and urine samples from the worlds in Daegu, South Korea.

Eight of the athletes received two-year suspensions, while one was handed a four-year ban.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soccer

Morgan stars for U.S. in comeback win over France

Alex Morgan scored twice as the U.S. women's soccer team rallied from an early 2-0 deficit Wednesday to open its Olympics with a 4-2 win over France.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Megan Rapinoe jumps into Alex Morgan's arms on Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tennis

Federer, Azarenka named top seeds

The International Tennis Federation named Roger Federer and Victoria Azarenka the No. 1-seeded Olympic singles players. The ITF says it awarded the seedings based on the ATP and WTA rankings of July 23. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Swimming

"We're a lot more laid back this time around, not only myself but as a team."

Fourteen-time gold medallist Michael Phelps on the U.S. swim team's outlook ahead of Olympic competition

Canada welcomed to Games

Flag-raising. 200 nations greeted with pomp and ceremony at Olympic athletes' village in London

A medieval pageant with a 20th-century Queen soundtrack marked Canada's flag-raising and official welcome to the Olympic athletes' village in London.

With just over 200 nations competing in the 2012 Summer Games, countries had to be welcomed in batches. The Maple Leaf's introduction to the central plaza Wednesday evening was accompanied by flags raised from Portugal, Morocco, Monaco and Serbia.

Britain's National Youth Theatre set the scene of a quirky court. Dressed in colourful jester garb, they cartwheeled and rode bikes down the plaza singing Bicycle Race, one of several songs from legendary British rock band Queen adapted for the ceremony. They were followed by athletes and officials from all five countries.

"This is my first Olympics, so I didn't know what to expect, but it was full of energy," said Vancouver swimmer Blake Worsley.

Performers executed backflips during a soulful version of We Are the Champions. A representative from each country was summoned to the stage to meet the village deputy mayor, British Olympic swimmer Duncan Goodhew, before the country's anthem played.

Canadian chef de mission Mark Tewksbury introduced himself to Goodhew as a fellow swimmer. They are of different Olympic eras. Goodhew won his gold in 1980, while Tewksbury's came in 1992.

The half-hour flag-raising ceremony, attended by Canada's Gov. Gen. David Johnston, provided pomp and ceremony for the Canadian athletes who won't participate in the opening ceremony Friday at Olympic Stadium.

The athletes' village at Olympic Park in London's East End is massive and will house 16,000 residents at its peak. Canada's quarters sit on the east end of the park.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"Seeing the flag coming up and having this chance to sing the national anthem, I'm really happy and that satisfies me."

Canadian diver Jennifer Abel, who soaked in the flag-raising ceremony knowing she will miss the opening ceremony on Friday

Mark Tewksbury, the Canadian chef de mission for the London 2012 Olympic Games, is seen during the official flag-raising ceremony on Wednesday.

JASON RANSOM/COC/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You can be pretty stubborn when the mood takes you and it is likely to take you today. You may discover though that you are not the only one who knows how to dig in their heels.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
No amount of compromise will work today, so be ready to fight for what you believe in. When it comes to willpower, you have more than most but a rival may not be as weak as they look.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Different people see things in different ways and if you can accept that, you won't have too many problems today. But if you insist the world agrees with you then you could find yourself in a lonely place.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Make sure you keep a sense of perspective over the next 24 hours, especially where money is concerned. What you own and earn is important, of course, but cash can't buy you the kind of love that you crave.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You can't help but be assertive and ambitious but don't go to extremes and start making the kind of demands of other people that you would never accept for yourself. You need more friends, not more enemies.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You seem to be asking yourself a lot of serious questions of late, but are you getting any intelligent answers? If not, maybe you should loosen up a bit and not take life so seriously – then the answers will come.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
If you go back on a promise today, you will regret it later. You must live up to your obligations, at home and at work because if you don't, you will let everyone down — including yourself.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
What happens today may shock you but you should have seen it coming. Also, it's unlikely to be as bad as you think, so don't overreact. What changes cannot be unchanged, no matter how forceful you may be.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
After being kept out of the loop for so long, you will discover what has been going on. It's unlikely to be as bad as you feared. It may even be good if you choose to take a long-term outlook.

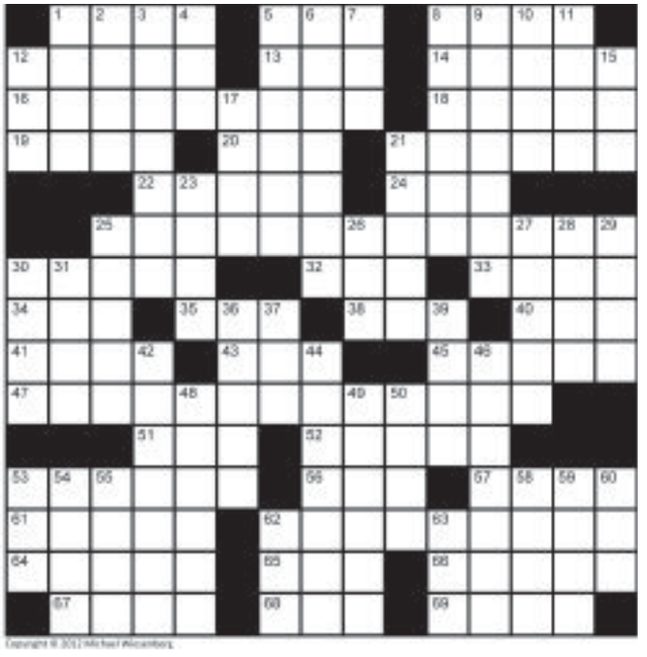
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Mind planet Mercury united with Pluto today suggests you need to take a more positive view of what's going on in the world. It's not all doom and gloom you know, in fact there are marvels in every direction.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Conflict of one kind or another is inevitable today and although that may not sound like very good news it has to happen. Only when the air is cleared can you all start to breathe more easily.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
The pressure has been cranking up for quite some time and over the next few days it may even become intolerable. But you are tougher than you look and will rise to the challenge. Give it your all. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Prime Ministers

BY MICHAEL WIESENBERG



Across
1. Prime Minister Chrétien
5. Where to find *The Sopranos*
8. Most common first name among Canadian PMs
12. Desperado chasers
13. Tax return rvw.
14. *Das Boot* setting
16. See 62-Across
18. Atoll explosion
19. Old dagger
20. It flows from Alberta
21. Mountainous regions of planets
22. Like some flowers
24. ___ de Cologne
25. Prime Minister April 20, 1968-June 4, 1979 and March 3, 1980-June 30, 1984
30. Surrounded by
32. Legal matter
33. Montréal, Québec, Maritimes locale
34. ___ Vegas
35. California Bay Area's largest airport, for short
38. Some in Québec
40. Letters ending an email or texted request
41. IMO cousin
43. Her: Ger.
45. Swimming (in)
47. First Prime Minister born after Confederation and only one to represent a Manitoba riding
51. Switch positions
52. Immune system component
53. Third Prime Minister, June 16, 1891-November 24, 1892
56. "Am __ trouble!"
57. Cowardly Lion player
61. "Mea ___": "my fault"
62. With 16-Across, second Prime Minister, November 7, 1873-October 8, 1878
64. First Radiohead single
65. Choice word
66. Prime Minister St. Laurent
67. Ill-mannered
68. 33-Acr. summer
69. Stuns

Down
1. ___ of Arc
2. Action-denoting suffix
3. Showed hospitality at the door
4. Born
5. Less clear
6. Manufacturer
7. "___ to Joy"
8. Alaska capital
9. Force (upon)
10. Certain gardener
11. US space gp.
12. In short, they served Canada
15. Sporty Audis
17. Film genre
21. To the point
23. Brief bylaws
25. Affirm
26. United spinoff
27. "___ apple every day to keep the doctor away"
28. Garage sale stipulation
29. Zion's locale
30. James Bond's *Octopussy* car, informally
31. Bryn ___ College: women's liberal arts college near Philadelphia
36. Premier
37. Electrical-impedance unit whose symbol is an omega
39. Satirist Mort
42. Cried "Yee-haw!"
44. Changed the bathroom decor
46. "What have we here?"
48. Open a package, maybe
49. Most freezing
50. '70s babies are part of this
53. USC : Pac 10 :: UNC : ___
54. New Westminster, BC-born Mason portrayer
55. Blue in Québec
58. ___ chori: for two voices, musically
59. "We have met the enemy and ___ us": Pogo quote
60. Monopoly utils.
62. Yes
63. In the manner of

Yesterday's crossword

What's online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

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			5		6	8		1
4	9		2					7
					3			
	5	8	7				1	4
7	4				2	3	5	
			1					
2					8		7	6
5		3	6		4			

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	8	1	5	7	4	9	3	6
9	5	6	1	3	8	7	2	4
4	3	7	2	9	6	8	1	5
7	2	5	3	1	9	6	4	8
6	1	3	4	8	7	5	9	2
8	9	4	6	5	2	1	7	3
1	4	8	7	6	3	2	5	9
5	6	2	9	4	1	3	8	7
3	7	9	8	2	5	4	6	1

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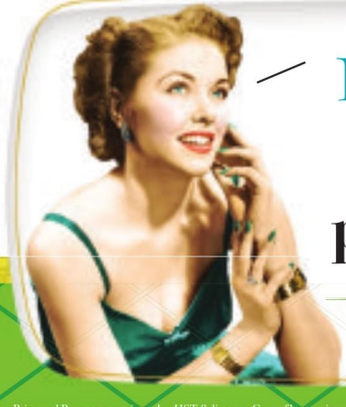

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